

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01
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PA-01 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15 STR-06 ITC-01 TRSE-00
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EEC
SUBJ: EC FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL, JANUARY 17, 1978:
HIGHLIGHTS

REFS: (A) BRUSSELS 994; (B) BRUSSELS 1016

1. SUMMARY: THE MAJOR OUTCOME OF THE JANUARY 17 EC
FOREIGN MINSITERS COUNCIL WAS AGREEMENT ON A COMMUNITY
POSITION ON AN MTN TARIFF-CUTTING FORMULA, AS WELL AS ON
THE COMMUNITY'S GENERAL POLITICAL APPROACH TO THE TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS (REPORTED REFTELS). IN OTHER ACTIONS,
THE MINISTERS: APPROVED A MANDATE FOR THE EC COMMISSION
TO NEGOTIATE WITH YUGOSLAVIA ON A NEW COOPERATION
AGREEMENT; DECIDED TO ALLOW THE COMMISSION GREATER
FLEXIBILITY IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH CYPRUS ON AGRICULTURAL
TRADE ARRANGEMENTS; AND AGREED ON MEASURES PROHIBITING
DOWNWARD ALIGNMENT OF STEEL PRICES BY COMMUNITY
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PRODUCERS TO MEET COMPETITION FROM THIRD COUNTRIES WHICH
HAVE SIGNED BILATERAL AGREEMENTS ON MARKET SHARES
(FOREGOING ALL REPORTED SEPTELS.) SEPTTEL ALSO REPORTS
ON MINISTERS' POLITICAL COOPERATION DISCUSSIONS ON THE
MIDDLE EAST. COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
IS REPORTED BELOW. END SUMMARY.

2. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DIRECT ELECTIONS:

AT A POST-MEETING PRESS CONFERENCE, UK FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN TOLD REPORTERS HE HAD FORMALLY NOTIFIED THE COUNCIL THAT THE UK WOULD BE UNABLE TO MEET THE MAY/JUNE 1978 TARGET DATE FOR EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DIRECT ELECTIONS BUT THAT HE HAD ALSO GIVEN HIS "OWN CONFIDENT ASSESSMENT" THAT THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION WOULD BE ADOPTED BY THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT THIS YEAR. OWEN IMPLIED TO REPORTERS THAT HE PERSONALLY FAVORED AN ELECTORAL DATE IN LATE SPRING 1979. ON THE BASIS OF OWEN'S REPORT, COREPER HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO BEGIN WORK ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW ELECTION DATE, WHICH WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE MARCH 7 FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL AND SUBMITTED TO THE APRIL 7-8 EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR DECISION.

3. PARLIAMENTARY SITE:

OWEN TOLD REPORTERS THAT FRANCE AND LUXEMBOURG HAVE AGAIN EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER INDEPENDENT ACTION BY THE PARLIAMENT TO RENT OFFICE SPACE IN BRUSSELS, WHICH THEY SEE AS A UNILATERAL ATTEMPT TO GRADUALLY SHIFT THE LOCUS OF PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITY FROM LUXEMBOURG AND STRASBOURG. WE UNDERSTAND DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSEN (COUNCIL PRESIDENT) IS TO REMIND EP PRESIDENT COLOMBO DURING THE JANUARY 17-20 PARLIAMENT SESSION IN LUXEMBOURG OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNCIL'S DECISION LAST FALL THAT THE MAIN ACTIVITIES OF PARLIAMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO CENTER IN LUXEMBOURG AND STRASBOURG UNLESS AND UNTIL THE EC MEMBER STATES SHOULD DECIDE OTHERWISE. HINTON

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